Happy Heart

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STRAWBERRY CHIFFON PIE

1 cup toasted wheat germ
1½ tablespoons sugar
3 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 10-ounce packages frozen sliced strawberries, thawed
1 envelope unflavored gelatin
¼ cup cold water
2 teaspoons grated orange peel
2 egg whites

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Combine wheat germ, sugar, and vegetable oil. Press firmly into a 9-inch pie pan. Bake until golden, about 8 minutes. Cool. Drain strawberries, reserving 1 cup liquid. In a medium bowl, sprinkle gelatin over water; stir well. Bring reserved strawberry liquid to a boil. Add to gelatin mixture along with orange peel, stirring until gelatin is dissolved. Chill until mixture begins to thicken and mounds slightly on a spoon, 20 to 30 minutes. Beat egg whites until soft peaks form. Fold into gelatin mixture along with reserved strawberries. Spoon into prepared crust. Chill until firm, about 3 hours.

Serves 6. Per portion: 0 mg cholesterol, 244 calories, 31 mg sodium.

BAKED ZITI AND VEGETABLES

16-ounce package ziti or penne macaroni
2 medium green peppers
2 medium carrots
2 medium celery stalks
1 medium onion
1 tablespoon salad oil
28-ounce can crushed tomatoes
3 cups spicy-hot vegetable juice
1 tablespoon sugar
1½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon dried oregano leaves
8-ounce package shredded mozzarella cheese
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Prepare macaroni as directed on package. Cut green peppers, carrots, celery, and onion into ½ -inch pieces. In nonstick 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat, in hot vegetable oil, cook vegetables until lightly browned. Stir in ½ cup water; continue cooking over medium heat until vegetables are tender-crisp.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Drain macaroni in colander, set aside. In same saucepot, add cooked vegetables; stir in crushed tomatoes, vegetable juice, sugar, salt, and oregano over high heat, heat to a boil. Remove saucepot from heat; stir in cooked macaroni. Reserve 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese for topping. Into macaroni mixture, add parmesan cheese for topping. Into macaroni mixture, add parmesan and remaining mozzarella cheese. Spoon mixture into a shallow 4-quart casserole. Sprinkle with reserved mozzarella cheese. Cover casserole and bake 30 minutes or until cheese melts and mixture is hot and bubbly. Makes 6 servings.

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FAT-FREE BANANA CRUNCH MUFFINS

1 cup all-purpose flour
½ cup wheat and barley cereal nuggets
½ cup sugar
½ teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
2 medium-size ripe bananas, mashed
½ cup plain nonfat yogurt
¼ cup thawed frozen egg substitute
½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place muffin cups in muffin pans. In a medium bowl, mix flour, cereal nuggets, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. In a large bowl, mix bananas, yogurt, egg substitute, and vanilla. Stir flour mixture into the large bowl. Stir until flour mixture is moist. Spoon into muffin pans. Bake for 20 minutes. Remove muffins from pan to cool.

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HEART HAPPY VALENTINE JELL-O

1 large package strawberry or cherry Jell-O
½ cup cherries or fresh strawberries, sliced
1 cup vanilla yogurt (healthy heart) OR vanilla ice cream, slightly softened
Yogurt or whipped topping for garnish

Mix Jell-O as per box directions. Divide mixture in half. Line Jell-O mold or glass dish with fruit and half of Jell-O. Fold yogurt or ice cream into half that remains. Layer on top of first layer. Refrigerate until serving time. Garnish with yogurt or whipped topping and Valentine heart candies.

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Jarrettsville, MD

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Archaeologists Find Clues To Past

NEWARK, Del. — Not all of the people who send samples to the University of Delaware Soil Laboratory these days are looking for fertilizer recommendations. Some of the lab's biggest customers are archaeologists seeking clues to the past. Indeed, the number of archaeological samples processed in the lab over the past three years is almost equal to the number of fertilizer samples, according to Karen Gartley, soil testing program coordinator.

A number of archaeological firms in Delaware and surrounding states use the university's soil lab services, Gartley says. "For example, we recently received 1,500 soil samples collected from excavations at Historic St. Mary's City, a colonial site in Maryland."

They've also tested thousands of samples from Delaware archaeological digs for the university's Center for Archaeological Research.

"The use of soil tests for archaeological research is still relatively new in this country, though the idea is catching on," says Keith Doms, staff archaeologist and manager of the center's laboratory.

"When we first started doing this, no one at the soil lab was aware of archaeology's use of soil samples. Old Sturbridge Village archaeologists were probably the first ones in the United States to do this in the early 1980s," he says. "In Europe they've been using them since the early 1970s to help interpret early Iron Age sites."

The center ran its first samples through the university soil lab back in 1984-85 while investigating the 19th century Wilson-Slack farm site near the intersection of Chestnut Hill Road-Route 4 and Route 72 in Newark.

The main elements tested for archaeological purposes are pH, calcium, magnesium, phosphorus and potassium.

"Soil samples are used to help figure out what's going on at a site," Doms explains. "For example, post holes tell us where a fence was, but they don't tell us anything about what the fence was for. Was it around a garden? The soil's likely to be higher in calcium. Was it around a pig sty? There'll be high phosphates in the soil.

"Normally we take two sets of samples — one from the plow layer and one from undisturbed subsoil — and compare them to see what differences exist," he continues. "At many of the sites we're excavating, there's no standing structure and the land has been farmed for many years. There's usually a very close approximation between the plow zone and the subsoil. It's the discrepancies that are interesting.

"This is a learning process," Doms says. "We're still exploring the uses of soil tests. Most of the archaeology that has brought us in contact with the soil lab is in fulfillment of regulations of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Most of the work is commissioned by DelDOT and relates to highway construction where federal moneys are involved, so an environmental impact report must be filed. This includes cultural as well as physical and environmental impact. The center also does pure research archeology."

Over the past 12 years, the center has excavated a number of tenant farms, two general stores, a blacksmith shop, a wheelwright shop, a colonial tavern, one owner-operated farm and four urban dwellings, as well as 10 pre-historic sites. Most of the soil samples collected from those sites were tested in the College of Agricultural Sciences.